

Message Text

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51

ACTION VO-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0113

INFO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 05498

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, CVIS, UK, US

SUBJECT: VISAS FOR OFFICIALS OF COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

1. EMBASSY HAS JUST HAD EMBARRASSING EXPERIENCE OF HAVING TO DENY A-2 VISA TO HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION OF COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT, A HIGH-RANKING NIGERIAN DIPLOMAT SECONDED TO SECRETARIAT. APPLICANT WAS GRANTED B-1 VISA, DESPITE PROTEST FROM SECRETARIAT THAT HE HAD BEEN GRANTED A-2 IN PAST.

2. COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT IS INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ASSOCIATION OF 33 MEMBER COUNTRIES OF BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AND IT, AS WELL AS ITS OFFICERS, ARE LISTED ON LONDON DIPLOMATIC LIST. OFFICIAL IN QUESTION, ACCORDING TO NOTE FROM SECRETARIAT, WAS TRAVELING TO UN ON SECRETARIAT BUSINESS PRESUMABLY IN CONNECTION WITH COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING DUE TO OPEN IN KINGTON ON APRIL 29. HE IS WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO SUCCESSION US EMBASSY OFFICERS AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN MOST CO-OPERATIVE. HOWEVER, THE SECRETARIAT DOES NOT APPEAR TO QUALIFY AS A "GOVERNMENT" IN THE SENSE OF SECTION 101 (A) (15) (A) OF INA.

3. AS OTHER SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS MAY WELL BE FOLLOWING SAME ROUTE IN COMING WEEKS, WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE IN HAVING SECRETARIAT LISTED AMONG RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR PURPOSES ISSUING G-4 VISAS TO QUALIFIED EMPLOYEES.

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RICHARDSON

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